

Hinduism

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Hinduism.

The Gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ.

What it is to Be a Hindu.

A MAN IS A HINDU BECAUSE OF TWO THINGS:—

BIRTH and CONFORMITY,

i. e., conformity to the rules of the caste into which he is born. These rules centre round food-regulations, occupation, ancestor-worship, marriage and other domestic ceremonies and worship of the household gods (usually left to the women).

BELIEF IS ALTOGETHER FREE.

Certain convictions, however, are held by nearly all Hindus:—

Validity of Caste.
Authority of the Vedas and of the Brahmans.
Doctrines of Transmigration and Karma.
Sacredness of the Cow.

A general characteristic is the tendency to:—

Mystic Pantheism

The Educated Hindu

has some belief in one God; polytheism has become incredible. The national movement is weakening caste. Faith in the religious basis of the Hindu family is fading.

The Orthodox Brahman

believes in the earlier form of Hinduism; keeps up the old ceremonies; acknowledges the old gods; is usually a Śivite or a Vishnuite; and studies one of the systems of philosophy.

The Average Villager

keeps up the ceremonies, worships Rama or Krishna or Śiva as his particular divinity, or in some cases Kali, Hanuman, or the local village demon-mother.

Philosophic and Popular Hinduism.

Hinduism exists as Abstract Philosophy expressed in many divergent schools of thought and rooted in Pantheistic conceptions of the universe. But because to the average man such abstractions convey little meaning, it also exists as a Popular Faith absorbing and reverting to the underlying Animism and degenerating into degrading Polytheism. Although to the popular form belong caste, idolatry, and unworthy incarnations of Deity, these are so interwoven with daily life that they permeate Hindu thought, educated as well as superstitious, so that it is impossible to differentiate these forms of Hinduism. Re-incarnation, though a philosophic conception, has spread to the lowest classes. There is no accepted body of doctrine and the tenets of the various sects are often mutually contradictory.

The Father Seeketh.

Sic Deus dilexit mundum.



I Thirst.

Lord
When saw we Thee
athirst
and did not minister
unto Thee?

The Call to the Church.

India needs men and women who in lives of humble service and patient suffering shall cause her to see and understand the Love of the Son of Man. For India will fall down and worship Christ when she sees Him.

I in them
and Thou in Me
that they may be perfected into one
that the world may know that Thou
didst send Me and lovedst them even
as Thou lovedst Me.

India's Search.

With many limitations and errors the people of India have diligently sought after God in eager desire that haply they might find Him.

Philosophic Hinduism and Christianity.

COMPARED AS TO:—

God.

Impersonal non-moral Reality.
All minor gods gathered under
the pantheistic All.

One God, Personal, Holy, Father—
revealed in Jesus Christ—Emmanuel.

The World.

Unreal.
The visible, illusion.

A battle-ground.
The visible, a sacrament.

Life.

Sin can be ignored.
Redemption from it unnecessary.
The explanation of life is found
in Transmigration and Karma.

Sin must be reckoned with.
Redemption is through the Cross of Christ
into Liberty and Life.

The Goal.

Release from Transmigration and
Union with the one Reality.
"I am Brahma."

Perfected Communion
with God.
"Christ liveth in me."

Popular Hinduism and Christianity.

COMPARED AS TO:—

Incarnation.

Avatars partial and recurring.

"The Word was made flesh and dwelt
among us and we beheld His glory,
full of grace and truth."

Often evil.

No Gospel for the sinner.

The Son of Man is come to seek and
to save that which was lost.

"To the mighty no sin attaches."

"In all points tempted like as we are yet
without sin."

Sin.

Largely outward and ceremonial.

Essentially inward and moral.

The Way of Salvation.

By Merit.

Won by a life of:—

1. Bhakti—the passion of a devotee.
2. Karma—conformity to ceremonial.
3. Jñāna—mystical vision arrived at by abstract meditation.

By Grace.

Resulting in a life of:—

1. Faith—the trust of a child.
2. Righteousness—conformity to Christ.
3. Knowledge of God—spiritual knowledge arrived at by obedient surrender in daily life.

Corporate Ideals.

Brotherhood confined by caste limits.

Brotherhood including all men
as children of one Father.

Each man's place in the social order unalterably pre-determined by results of previous existence. Tending to fatalistic acquiescence in the will of God.

Each man's place in the social order depending on the wise providence of a loving Father. Tending to active co-operation with the will of God.

The Past.

Irrevocable, must be expiated by man.

Forgiveness for man at infinite cost to God.

The Future.

A recurring series of temporary heavens
and hells between incarnations.

Personal immortality in the presence of God.

